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Literary Society.

In continuation of our endeavours to excite in the public mind, some interest in pursuits that have of late fallen into neglect; to rouse some of the latent sparks of genius, talent, and the power of investigation, which must exist tho' they lie dormant and inactive; and to diffuse throughout the community of India generally some portion of that love of Information, respect of Science, and due estimation of Philosophical Research, which characterizes the land of our birth, and gives to Britain the proud pre-eminence that she enjoys over all the nations of the earth; we present to them in our columns of to-day a document which deserves their deepest attention.

We have before given the outline-history of the Foundation of the Bombay Literary Society, and a list of the Papers composing the first Volume of their Transactions, which has but just reached India. We may add some facts with which we are personally acquainted, as they will tend to shew the eminent utility of such an Institution, and the new sources of pleasure that are opened by it to society at large.

The Rooms belonging to the Society are in a central situation in the Town of Bombay, so as to be conveniently accessible to all. One portion of the apartments are laid out in a splendid Library, comprising at this time probably more than 10,000 volumes. Into this, Subscribers are admitted, with the privilege of introducing strangers without charge for a month. It is furnished with all the popular Journals and periodical works of the day, and the most approved Atlases of maps and charts, with globes, and every other necessary for the gratification of enquiry. Books are taken out by the Subscribers on the usual terms of Circulating Libraries.

An apartment is separated from this, for the meetings of the Literary Society, admission into which is obtained by ballot, and great care is taken to confine this privilege to such only as may from their talents and acquirements be likely to add to its celebrity, and aid the accomplishment of the end for which it was instituted.

To this department is attached a Museum of Nature and Art, in which are preserved specimens of the animal and mineral kingdoms in great variety, models of machinery and other curiosities, with philosophical instruments for the investigation of subjects connected with science.

During our stay at Bombay, at different periods in the years 1815, 1817, and 1818, the meetings of this Society were held weekly, for the purpose of reading such original Papers as might have been presented to the Secretary in the interim; and for Literary conversation. These meetings usually assembled at four o'clock, and continued until sun-set, when carriages were at the door for the evening drive; so that they neither interfered with business nor pleasure, nor were they likely at that hour to be interrupted by heaviness at the approach of sleep, which is the evil of meetings after a late dinner.

As far as our own experience went, these meetings were not fully attended, seldom exceeding twenty, and often twelve or fifteen persons; but as these comprised the best informed members of the Society; they were the more agreeable, and the more effectual too, perhaps, from their being thus select.

A meeting never took place, without an original Paper being read, on some branch of Literature: for it is one of the prominent features of the Bombay Literary Society, and that which gives it a decided superiority over the Asiatic Society of Bengal, that any

subject within the extensive range of Literature generally, is admitted for discussion, instead of confining it purely to Oriental matter, in which so few are found willing to devote the application necessary to excel. A new reading of Euripides,—a dissertation on some geographical difficulty in Xenophon—an enquiry into some local custom of Greece alluded to by Polybius—a search after the site of an ancient monument described by Pausanias—an agricultural practice of antiquity to illustrate Husiod or Virgil—would be as readily received as an enquiry into the effects of polygamy on the population of India—the causes and cure of the prevailing Epidemic—or in short any other subject suggested by local circumstances.

After the reading of such Papers, the members present at the meeting are permitted to make their observations on any portion of their contents, and the originals are then handed over to the Committee of Papers, for their determination as to their being printed with the Transactions of the Society.

It is impossible to describe the advantages arising to the Community at large from all this, and more particularly to the younger branches of it; new topics of conversation are suggested, emulation is excited, a habit of reasoning and enquiry is formed, and a taste is established for that which is permanently beautiful and excellent, in opposition to those frivolities which live but their little hour upon the stage, and leave disgust behind them when the charm of their novelty is gone.

The example of the Bombay Literary Society was followed at Madras, principally through the active exertions of Mr. Benjamin Babington, of the Honourable Company's Civil Service at that Presidency, who happened to be staying at Bombay for some time with a relative, and saw sufficient of the good effects of the Institution on the circles there, not only to take a lively interest in it and to give it a constant attendance, but to form the project of introducing a similar establishment at Madras on his return there.

The history of the formation of the Madras Society, and an account of the Papers that have been progressively read before it, have been detailed by us from time to time from the Madras Gazettes, in which they were occasionally reported; and although that Society has recently sustained the loss of two of its brightest ornaments and most zealous supporters,—Mr. Ellis, the first Orientalist probably in India, by an unfortunate and premature death,—and Mr. Babington, certainly one of the most promising young man in the service, who has been compelled to leave England on account of ill health, first undermined by his enthusiastic application to study and research;—yet we may hope that though their places cannot immediately be supplied, the constitution of the Society itself, and the respectable talents of its leading members will ensure all the many and important benefits which must result in any community from the cultivation of Literature generally and the free dissemination of both elegant and useful information.

We should have been happy to have closed this sketch with a notice of some similar Institution among us here in Calcutta. The reputation of the Asiatic Society, the transcendent abilities and refined taste of its Founder, the talents of its succeeding Presidents, and the mass of erudition and accurate research displayed in their valuable labours which are already before the world; render any eulogium on the excellence of this Establishment quite unnecessary. But their investigations are confined to Oriental Literature, and are carried on slowly, with all the patient examination that such abstruse subjects requires, and always in the tranquillity of retirement from the noise and bustle of active or of fashionable life. Their meetings are consequently not frequent, and even these

few are often dull, from a combination of circumstances, among which we may mention the lateness of the hour, nine in the evening, the local interest of the subjects treated of, and their abstruse nature scarcely intelligible sometimes to more than half a dozen members of the meeting, beyond the President, the Secretary, and the Writer himself;—the consequent diffidence felt by those present to offer any opinion upon such portions even as they may comprehend, and the absence of that animated conversation which arises in an assembly where the subject brought before it is equally felt, understood, and valued by all.

The effect produced on the circles of society at large, is therefore scarcely if at all felt. We have never heard of a subject of conversation in either a large or small party, the merits of any Paper read before the Asiatic Society examined and discussed; so that a taste for Literature, and a fondness for the higher departments of knowledge is not engendered or promoted by the meetings of that Institution.

At Bombay, however, where all the varied departments of History, Poetry, Morals, Science, Art, and Philosophy, are equally within the range of the objects contemplated by the Society, these become matters of discussion, first in the Institution itself, thence in the private circles of the more elegant and accomplished members of it in their families, and lastly throughout the community at large; and if we were called upon to express our opinions frankly on the influence which this must have in refining the tone of society generally, we should have no hesitation in saying that there are circles at Bombay, which from this cause principally resemble more closely the elegant yet intellectual parties of our own dear home, than are to be found in either of the other Presidencies of India, except among those distinguished few who as compared to the whole are like the Oases of the Desert, verdant isles amid barren sands, at which the thirsty traveller after traversing long and arid wastes, may refresh his spirit, with streams that yield him again a sense of former happiness.

But we have wandered from our original intention, which was to present our readers with the Preliminary Discourse of Sir James Mackintosh, at the first Meeting of the Bombay Literary Society, of which we have spoken. We desire only that our readers may for a moment suppose it to be addressed to themselves individually, as members of the community of this proud capital of British India; and though we are aware that it is an invidious task to presume to direct the public taste, we are willing to suffer all the odium heaped on us by the ignorant and unthinking, if we can only stimulate "the few" as contradistinguished from "the many," to the exertion of that talent with which nature has blessed them, to refine the manners, improve the understanding, and so increase the sources of pure and unalloyed delight, as to cheer that banishment, which, in our separation from all that is great and excellent in mind rather than in fortune, can only be soothed by approximating our pleasures to those that adorn and exalt the dear and distant land of our birth.

A Discourse at the opening of the Literary Society of Bombay, by Sir James Mackintosh, President of the Society, Read at Parrell, 26th November 1804.

GENTLEMEN,

The smallest society, brought together by the love of knowledge, is respectable in the eye of reason; and the feeble efforts of infant literature in barren and inhospitable regions are in some respects more interesting than the most elaborate works and the most successful exertions of the human mind. They prove the diffusion at least, if not the advancement, of science; and they afford some sanction to the hope that knowledge is destined one day to visit the whole earth, and in her beneficent progress to illuminate and humanize the whole race of man.

It is therefore with singular pleasure that I see a small but respectable body of men assembled here by such a principle. I hope that we agree in considering all Europeans who visit remote countries, whatever their separate pursuits may be, as detachments from the main body of civilized men, sent out to levy contributions of knowledge as well as to gain victories over barbarism.

When a large portion of a country so interesting as India fell into the hands of one of the most intelligent and inquisitive nations of the world, it was natural to expect that its ancient and present state should at last be fully disclosed. These expectations were indeed for a time disappointed; during the tumult of revolution and war it would have been unreasonable to have entertained

them; and when tranquillity was established in that country which continues to be the centre of the British power in Asia, it ought not to have been forgotten that every Englishman was fully occupied by commerce, by military service, or by administration; that we had among us no idle public of readers, and consequently no separate profession of writers; and that every hour bestowed on study was to be stolen from the leisure of men often harassed by business, enervated by the climate, and more disposed to seek amusement than new occupation in the intervals of their appointed toils. It is, besides, a part of our national character, that we are seldom eager to display, and not always ready to communicate, what we have acquired. In this respect we differ considerably from other lettered nations; our ingenious and polite neighbours on the continent of Europe,—to whose enjoyment the applause of others seems more indispensable, whose faculties are more nimble and restless, if not more vigorous, than ours,—are neither so patient of repose nor so likely to be contented with a secret hoard of knowledge. They carry even into their literature a spirit of bustle and parade,—a bustle indeed which springs from activity, and a parade which animates enterprise, but which are incompatible with our sluggish and sullen dignity. Pride disdains ostentation, scorns false pretensions, despises even petty merit, refuses to obtain the objects of pursuit by flattery or importunity, and scarcely values any praise but that which she has the right to command. Pride, with which foreigners charge us, and which under the name of a sense of dignity we claim for ourselves, is a lazy and unsocial quality; and in these respects, as in most others, the very reverse of the sociable and good-humoured vice of vanity. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if in India our national character, co-operating with local circumstances, should have produced some real and perhaps more apparent inactivity in working the mine of knowledge of which we had become the masters. Yet some of the earliest exertions of private Englishmen are too important to be passed over in silence. The compilation of laws by Mr. Halhed, and the *Ayeen Akbari*, translated by Mr. Gladwin, deserve honourable mention. Mr. Wilkins gained the memorable distinction of having opened the treasures of a new learned language to Europe.

But, notwithstanding the merit of these individual exertions, it cannot be denied that the era of a general direction of the minds of Englishmen in this country towards learned inquiry, was the foundation of the Asiatic Society by Sir William Jones. To give such an impulse to the public understanding is one of the greatest benefits that a man can confer on his fellow men. On such an occasion as the present, it is impossible to pronounce the name of Sir William Jones without feelings of gratitude and reverence. He was among the distinguished persons who adorned one of the brightest periods of English literature. It was no mean distinction to be conspicuous in the age of Burke and Johnson; of Hume and Smith; of Gray and Goldsmith, of Gibbon and Robertson, of Reynolds and Garrick. It was the fortune of Sir William Jones to have been the friend of the greater part of these illustrious men. Without him, the age in which he lived would have been inferior to past times in one kind of literary glory. He surpassed all his contemporaries, and perhaps even the most laborious scholars of the two former centuries, in extent and variety of attainment. His facility in acquiring was almost prodigious, and he possessed that faculty of arranging and communicating his knowledge, which these laborious scholars very generally wanted. Erudition, which in them was often disorderly and rugged, and had something of an illiberal and almost barbarous air, was by him presented to the world with all the elegance and amenity of polite literature. Though he seldom directed his mind to those subjects of which the successful investigation confers the name of a philosopher, yet he possessed in a very eminent degree that habit of disposing his knowledge in regular and analytical order, which is one of the properties of a philosophical understanding. His talents as an elegant writer in verse were among his instruments for attaining knowledge, and a new example of the variety of his accomplishments. In his easy and flowing prose we justly admire that order of exposition and transparency of language which are the most indispensable qualities of style, and the chief excellencies of which it is capable when it is employed solely to instruct. His writings every where breathe pure taste in morals as well as in literature; and it may be said with truth, that not a single sentiment has escaped him which does not indicate the real elegance and dignity which pervaded the most secret recesses of his mind. He had lived perhaps too exclusively in the world of learning for the cultivation of his practical understanding. Other men have meditated more deeply on the constitution

tion of society, and have taken more comprehensive views of its complicated relations and infinitely varied interests. Others have therefore often taught sounder principles of political science; but no man more warmly felt, and no author is better calculated to inspire, those generous sentiments of liberty without which the most just principles are useless and lifeless, and which will, I trust, continue to flow through the channels of eloquence and poetry into the minds of British youth.

It has indeed been sometimes lamented that Sir William Jones should have exclusively directed his inquiry towards antiquities. But every man must be allowed to recommend most strongly his own favourite pursuits; and the chief difficulty as well as the chief merit is his who first raises the minds of men to the love of any part of knowledge. When mental activity is once roused, its direction is easily changed, and the excesses of one writer, if they are not checked by public reason, are corrected by the opposite excesses of his successor. "Whatever withdraws us from the dominion of the senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, and the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings."

It is not for me to attempt an estimate of those exertions for the advancement of knowledge which have arisen from the example and exhortations of Sir William Jones. In all judgments pronounced on our contemporaries it is so certain that we shall be accused, and so probable that we may be justly accused, of either partially bestowing or invidiously withholding praise, that is in general better to attempt no encroachment on the jurisdiction of Time, which alone impartially and justly estimates the works of men. But it would be unpardonable not to speak of the College at Calcutta, of which the original plan was doubtless the most magnificent attempt ever made for the promotion of learning in the East. I am not conscious that I am biased either by personal feelings or literary prejudices, when I say that I consider that original plan as a wise and noble proposition, of which the adoption in its full extent would have had the happiest tendency to secure the good government of India, as well as to promote the interest of science. Even in its present mutilated state we have seen, at the last public exhibition, Sanscrit declamations by English youth; a circumstance so extraordinary*, that, if it be followed by suitable advances, it will mark an epoch in the history of learning. Among the humblest fruits of this spirit I take the liberty to mention the project of forming this Society, which occurred to me before I left England, but which never could have advanced even to its present state without your hearty concurrence, and which must depend on your active co-operation for all hopes of future success.

You will not suspect me of presuming to dictate the nature and object of our common exertions. To be valuable they must be spontaneous; and no literary society can subsist on any other principle than that of equality. In the observations which I shall make on the plan and subject of our inquiries, I shall offer myself to you only as the representative of the curiosity of Europe. I am ambitious of no higher office than that of faithfully conveying to India the desires and wants of the learned at home, and of stating the subjects on which they wish and expect satisfaction, from inquiries which can be pursued only in India. In fulfilling the duties of this mission, I shall not be expected to exhaust so vast a subject, nor is it necessary that I should attempt an exact distribution of science. A very general sketch is all that I can promise; in which I shall pass over many subjects rapidly, and dwell only on those parts on which from my own habits of study I may think myself least disqualified to offer useful suggestions.

The objects of these inquiries, as of all human knowledge, are reducible to two classes, which, for want of more significant and precise terms, we must be content to call Physical and Moral; aware of the laxity and ambiguity of these words, but not affecting a greater degree of exactness than is necessary for our immediate purpose.

The physical sciences afford so easy and pleasing an amusement: they are so directly subservient to the useful arts; and in their higher forms they so much delight our imagination and flatter our pride, by the display of the authority of man over nature, that there can be no need of arguments to prove their utility, and no

want of powerful and obvious motives to dispose men to their cultivation. The whole extensive and beautiful science of natural history, which is the foundation of all physical knowledge, has many additional charms in a country where so many treasures must still be unexplored. The science of mineralogy, which has been of late years cultivated with great activity in Europe, has such a palpable connexion with the useful arts of life, that it cannot be necessary to recommend it to the attention of the intelligent and curious. India is a country which I believe no mineralogist has yet examined, and which would doubtless amply repay the labour of the first scientific adventurers who explore it. The discovery of new sources of wealth would probably be the result of such an investigation; and something might perhaps be contributed towards the accomplishment of the ambitious projects of those philosophers, who from the arrangement of earths and minerals have been bold enough to form conjectures respecting the general laws which have governed the past revolutions of our planet, and which preserve its parts in their present order.

The botany of India has been less neglected, but it cannot be exhausted. The higher parts of the science,—the structure, the functions, the habits of vegetables,—all subjects intimately connected with the first of physical sciences, though unfortunately the most dark and difficult, the philosophy of life,—have in general been too much sacrificed to objects of value indeed, but of a value far inferior: and professed botanists have usually contented themselves with observing enough of plants to give them a name in their scientific language and a place in their artificial arrangement. Much information also remains to be gleaned on the part of natural history which regards animals. The manners of many tropical races must have been perfectly observed in a few individuals separated from their fellows and imprisoned in the unfriendly climate of Europe.

The variation of temperature; the state of the atmosphere, all the appearances that are comprehended under the words weather and climate, are the conceivable subject of a science of which no rudiments yet exist. It will probably require the observations of centuries to lay the foundations of theory on this subject. There can scarce be any region of the world more favourably circumstanced for observation than India; for there is none in which the operation of these causes is more regular, more powerful, or more immediately discoverable in their effect on vegetable and animal nature. Those philosophers who have denied the influence of climate on the human character were not inhabitants of a tropical country.

To the members of the learned profession of medicine, who are necessarily spread over every part of India, all the above inquiries peculiarly though not exclusively belong. Some of them are eminent for science, many must be well informed, and their profession education must have given to all some tincture of physical knowledge. With even moderate preliminary acquirements they may be very useful, if they will but consider themselves as philosophical collectors, whose duty it is never to neglect a favourable opportunity for observations on weather and climate; to keep exact journals of whatever they observe, and to transmit through their immediate superiors to the scientific depositories of Great Britain specimens of every mineral, vegetable, or animal production which they conceive to be singular, or with respect to which they suppose themselves to have observed any new and important facts. If their previous studies have been imperfect, they will no doubt be sometimes mistaken. But these mistakes are perfectly harmless. It is better that ten useless specimens should be sent to London, than that one curious specimen should be neglected.

But it is on another and a still more important subject that we expect the most valuable assistance from our medical associates; this is the science of medicine itself. It must be allowed not to be quite so certain as it is important. But though every man ventures to scoff at its uncertainty as long as he is in vigorous health, yet the hardest sceptic becomes credulous as soon as his head is fixed to the pillow. Those who examine the history of medicine without either scepticism or blind admiration will find that every civilized age, after all the fluctuations of systems, opinions, and modes of practice, has at length left some balance, however small, of new truth to the succeeding generation, and that the stock of human knowledge in this as well as in other departments is constantly, though it must be owned very slowly, increasing. Since my arrival here I have had sufficient reason to believe that the practitioners of medicine in India are not unworthy of their enlightened and bene-

* It must be remembered that this Discourse was read in 1804. In the present year, this circumstance could no longer be called extraordinary. From the learned care of Mr. Hamilton, late Professor of Indian Languages at the East India College, a proficiency in Sanscrit is become not uncommon even in a European Institution.

volent profession. From them therefore I hope the public may derive, through the medium of this society, information of the highest value. Diseases and modes of cure unknown to European physicians may be disclosed to them; and if the causes of disease are more active in this country than in England, remedies are employed and diseases subdued, at least in some cases, with a certainty which might excite the wonder of the most successful practitioners in Europe. By full and faithful narratives of their modes of treatment they will conquer that distrust of new plans of cure, and that incredulity respecting whatever is uncommon, which sometimes prevail among our English physicians; which are the natural result of much experience and many disappointments; and which, though individuals have often just reason to complain of their indiscriminate application, are not ultimately injurious to the progress of the medical art. They never finally prevent the adoption of just theory or of useful practice. They retard it no longer than is necessary for such a severe trial as precludes all future doubt. Even in their excess they are wholesome correctives of the opposite excess of credulity and dogmatism. They are safeguards against exaggeration and quackery; they are tests of utility and truth. A philosophical physician who is a real lover of his art ought not, therefore, to desire the extinction of these dispositions, though he may suffer temporary injustice from their influence.

Those objects of our inquiries which I have called moral (employing that term in the sense in which it is contradistinguished from physical) will chiefly comprehend the past and present condition of the inhabitants of the vast country which surround us.

To begin with their present condition. I take the liberty of very earnestly recommending a kind of research, which has hitherto been either neglected or only carried on for the information of Government. I mean the investigation of those facts which are the subjects of political arithmetic and statistics, and which are a part of the foundation of the science of political oeconomy. The numbers of the people; the number of births, marriages, and deaths; the proportion of children who are reared to maturity; the distribution of the people according to their occupations and castes, and especially according to the great divisions of agricultural and manufacturing; and the relative state of these circumstances at different periods, which can only be ascertained by permanent tables,—are the basis of this important part of knowledge. No tables of political arithmetic have yet been made public from any tropical country. I need not expatiate on the information which such tables would be likely to afford. I shall mention only as an example of their value, that they must lead to a decisive solution of the problems with respect to the influence of polygamy on population, and the supposed origin of that practice in the disproportioned number of the sexes. But in a country where every part of the system of manners and institutions differs from those of Europe, it is impossible to foresee the extent and variety of the new results which an accurate survey might present to us.

These inquiries are naturally followed by those which regard the subsistence of the people; the origin and distribution of public wealth: the wages of every kind of labour, from the rudest to the most refined; the price of commodities, and especially of provisions, which necessarily regulates that of all others; the modes of the tenure and occupation of land; the profits of trade; the usual and extraordinary rates of interest, which are the price paid for the hire of money; the nature and extent of domestic commerce, every where the greatest and the most profitable, though the most difficult to be ascertained; those of foreign traffic, more easy to be determined by the accounts of exports and imports: the contributions by which the expenses of Government, of charitable, learned, and religious foundations are defrayed; the laws and customs which regulate all these great objects, and the fluctuation which has been observed in all or any of them at different times and under different circumstances. These are some of the points towards which I should very earnestly wish to direct the curiosity of our intelligent countrymen in India.

These inquiries have the advantage of being easy and open to all men of good sense. They do not, like antiquarian and philological researches, require great previous erudition and constant reference to extensive libraries. They require nothing but a resolution to observe facts attentively, and to relate them accurately. And whoever feels a disposition to ascend from facts to principles, will in general find sufficient aid in his understanding in the great work of Dr. Smith, the most permanent monument of philosophical genius which our nation has produced in the present age.

They have the further advantage of being closely and intimately connected with the professional pursuits and public duties of

every Englishman who fills a civil office in this country—they form the very science of administration. One of the first requisites to the right administration of a district is the knowledge of its population, industry, and wealth. A magistrate ought to know the condition of the country which he superintends; a collector ought to understand its revenue, a commercial resident ought to be thoroughly acquainted with its commerce. We only desire that a part of the knowledge which they ought to possess should be communicated to the world.

I will not pretend to affirm that no part of this knowledge ought to be confined to Government. I am not so intoxicated by philosophical prejudice as to maintain that the safety of a state is to be endangered for the gratification of scientific curiosity. Though I am far from thinking that this is the department in which secrecy is most useful, yet I do not presume to exclude it. But let it be remembered, that whatever information is thus confined to a government may for all purposes of science be supposed not to exist. As long as the secrecy is thought important, it is of course shut up from most of those who could turn it to best account; and when it ceases to be guarded with jealousy, it is as effectually secured from all useful examination by the mass of official lumber under which it is usually buried. For this reason, after a very short time it is, as much lost to the Government itself as it is to the public. A transient curiosity, or the necessity of illustrating some temporary matter, may induce a public officer to dig for knowledge under the heaps of rubbish that encumber his office. But I have myself known intelligent public officers content themselves with the very inferior information contained in printed books, while their shelves groaned under the weight of MSS., which would be more instructive if they could be read. Further: it must be observed that publication is always the best security to a government that they are not deceived by the reports of their servants; and where these servants act at a distance, the importance of such a security for their veracity is very great. For the truth of a manuscript report they never can have a better warrant than the honesty of one servant who prepares it, and of another who examines it. But for the truth of all long-uncontested narratives of important facts in printed accounts, published in countries where they may be contradicted, we have the silent testimony of every man who might be prompted by interest, prejudice, or humour, to dispute them if they were not true.

I have already said that all communications merely made to Government are lost to science; while on the other hand, perhaps, the knowledge communicated to the public is that of which a Government may most easily avail itself, and on which it may most securely rely. This loss to science is very great; for the principles of political oeconomy have been investigated in Europe, and the application of them to such a country as India must be one of the most curious tests which could be contrived of their truth and universal operation. Every thing here is new; and if they are found here also to be the true principles of natural subsistence and wealth, it will be no longer possible to dispute that they are the general laws which every where govern this important part of the movements of the social machine.

It has been lately observed, that "if the various state of Europe kept and published annually an exact account of their population, noting carefully in a second column the exact age at which the children die; the second column would show the relative merit of the governments and the comparative happiness of their subjects. A simple arithmetical statement would then perhaps be more conclusive than all the arguments which could be produced." I agree with the ingenious writers who have suggested this idea, and I think it must appear perfectly evident that the number of children reared to maturity must be among the tests of the happiness of a society; though the number of children born cannot be so considered, and is often the companion and one of the causes of public misery. It may be affirmed without the risk of exaggeration, that every accurate comparison of the state of different countries at the same time or of the same country at different times, is an approach to that state of things in which the manifest palpable interest of every government will be the prosperity of its subjects, which never has been and which never will be advanced by any other means than those of humanity and justice. The prevalence of justice would not indeed be universally ensured by such a conviction; for bad governments, as well as bad men, as often act against their own obvious interest as against that of others; but the chances of tyranny must be diminished when tyrants are compelled to see that it is folly. In the mean time the ascertainment of every new fact, the discovery of every new principle, and even

the diffusion of principles known before, add to that great body of slowly and reasonably formed public opinion, which however weak at first, must at last with a gentle and scarcely sensible coercion compel every government to pursue its own real interest.

This knowledge is a controul on subordinate agents for Government, as well as a controul on Government for their subjects. And it is one of those which has not the slightest tendency to produce tumult or convulsion. On the contrary, nothing more clearly evinces the necessity of that firm protecting power by which alone order can be secured. The security of the governed cannot exist without the security of the governors.

Lastly, of all kinds of knowledge, political oeconomy has the greatest tendency to promote quiet and safe improvement in the general condition of mankind; because it shows that improvement is the interest of the government and that stability is the interest of the people. The extraordinary and unfortunate events of our times have indeed damped the sanguine hopes of good men, and filled them with doubt and fear. But in all possible cases the counsels of this science are at least safe. They are adapted to all forms of government; they require only a wise and just administration. They require, as the first principle of all prosperity, that perfect security of persons and property which can only exist where the supreme authority is stable.

On these principles, nothing can be a means of improvement which is not also a means of preservation. It is not only absurd but contradictory to speak of sacrificing the present generation for the sake of posterity. The moral order of the world is not so disposed. It is impossible to promote the interest of future generations by any measures injurious to the present; and he who labours industriously to promote the honour, the safety, and the prosperity of his own country, by innocent and lawful means, may be assured that he is contributing, probably as much as the order of nature will permit a private individual, towards the welfare of all mankind.

These hopes of improvement have survived in my breast all the calamities of our European world, and are not extinguished by that general condition of national insecurity which is the most formidable enemy of improvement. Founded on such principles, they are at least perfectly innocent. They are such as, even if they were visionary, an admirer or cultivator of letters ought to be pardoned for cherishing. Without them, literature and philosophy can claim no more than the highest rank among the amusements, and ornaments of human life. With these hopes, they assume the dignity of being part of that discipline under which the race of man is destined to proceed to the highest degree of civilization, virtue, and happiness, of which our nature is capable.

On a future occasion I may have the honour to lay before you my thoughts on the principal objects of inquiry in the geography ancient and modern, the languages, the literature, the necessary and elegant arts, the religion, the authentic history and the antiquities of India, and on the mode in which such inquiries appear to me most likely to be conducted with success.

Monument near Bhilsah.

To the Editor of the Calcutta Journal.

Sir,

I do myself the pleasure to transmit you a short account of a most remarkable Monument of antiquity, existing near Bhilsah, which if you think it will be at all agreeable to your numerous readers, you are at full liberty to insert in your valuable Journal. Facsimiles of the Inscriptions shall be forwarded at some future period.

Sir, your obedient servant,

Banares, June 17, 1819:

E. FELL.

Description of an ancient and remarkable Monument, near Bhilsah.

On the table land of a detached hill, distant from Bhilsah 4 miles and a half, in a south-westerly direction, is an ancient fabric, of a hemispherical form, built of thin layers of freestone, in the nature of steps, without any cement, and to all appearance solid; the outside of which has been faced throughout with a coat of chunam mortar, 4 inches thick; most of this still remains in perfect preservation, but in one or two places a small portion has been washed away by the rain:

The Monument (for such I shall term it) is strengthened by a buttress of stone masonry, 12 feet high and 7 broad, all around the base, the measured circumference of which is 564 feet. The diameter of the superior surface is 35 feet, the ascent to which is easy by the assistance of the projections of the different layers. Originally it was crowned with a cupola, supported by pillars; but the cupola is now split, and lies, as well as the pillars, on the top. A line drawn from any given point of the base to the centre of the crown measures 112 feet.

The weight, together with the age and extent of the structure, has forced a portion of the buttress to jut out and give way, by which I had a fair opportunity of fully determining that no cement has been used in the interior of it.

From the different buildings near it having fallen into decay, whilst this stands entire, together with its immense extent, which would rather aid dilapidation than otherwise, I am induced strongly to suspect (enforced by the general impression the structure made upon me whilst examining it, and an aperture appearing in every representation of the Monument, sculptured in the different compartments of the gate-ways and even on detached stones) that it is supported by internal pillars. If so, apartments undoubtedly exist within, highly interesting, and worthy of being further examined. Indeed when you view so large a mass of stone placed in such neat order without any cement in the interstices, it must forcibly strike the most superficial observer, that inner supporters were requisite to its completion, and were undoubtedly used in the construction.

This point could not be ascertained without much time and labour, and would require also, I presume, the acquiescence and countenance of the Nawaub of Bhopal, in whose territory it is situated; but I conceive that no hesitation would be made to this on the score of its creating jealousies, as the Monument is of a nature which prevents the orthodox Hindoo from visiting it, and the Jains, as well as every other class have become totally indifferent regarding it.

As dilapidation has commenced, the ravages of a few years, most probably, will cause the whole to fall into a mass of ruin, destroying the inner apartments and images, if any, and thus for ever depriving the curious from knowing what so wonderful a Monument of human genius contains.

It is surrounded by a colonnade of granite pillars, 10 feet high, distant from each other a foot and a half, connected by parallels also of granite, of an elliptical form, united by tenons, leaving an area of 12 feet clear of the base of the Monument, to which it strictly conforms.

At the east, west, and north points, are gate-ways, plain parallelograms, the extreme height of each of which is 40 feet, and the breadth within the perpendiculars 9 feet. They all measure 20 feet to the lintels, which are slightly curved and sculptured, with circles of flowers. In the northern gateway, which is the principal one, the lintel rests on elephants, four feet in height, richly caparisoned, borne by a projecting cornice, 16 feet from the base. The perpendiculars are divided into 4 unequal compartments; in the lower are statues of door-wardens, in long loose drapery, the left hand of each figure resting on the left side, and the right grasping a battle-axe; their head dresses are not unlike the matted-hair tiara of Hindoo devotees, with the top-knot thrown forward.

The other divisions are filled as follows. In one is a groupe of females, some sitting, others kneeling in homage to a tree and altar, their hands uplifted, and faces towards the tree, their countenances bearing marks of extreme devotional fervour. In another, the principal figure is a male, clothed in a long flowing garment resembling a surplice, standing with joined hands, and in the act of adoration to the tree and altar, which throughout the sculpture appear to be the objects of veneration. This male figure is attended by females, some holding umbrellas over his head, others using chowries; above these, on a level with the top of the tree, are small winged figures making offerings in censers.

The drapery throughout the groupe is generally, for the females, a long flowing vest resembling that which we observe in Grecian sculpture; that of the males, light lower garments from the navel as far as the middle of the thigh, tied with a knot in front, and hanging down as low as the instep, as in the present Indian mode of dressing. The upper part of the body is naked, without any mark of a sacerdotal thread; and, with a very few exceptions, the head dress is a high turban with plumes.

In another compartment is a representation of the Monument, surrounded by figures in groupes, some standing, others sitting

cross-legged, others bowing, all with joined hands, and in the act of worship. On the Monument, and resting on a square pedestal are three layers jutting out beyond each other, crowned by a lofty umbrella, supported by small winged figures naked, their hands joined, and heads covered with numerous serpent hoods.

On entering the different gateways, is seen a statue of Buddha as large as life, seated cross-legged on a throne which is supported by lions couchant, the back of the image rests against the buttress, and has attendants on both sides using chowries. All of these are much mutilated, and one is removed and thrown across the area.

The perpendiculars of the western gateway, are also divided into four unequal compartments; in the lower are statues of door-keepers, one of whom is armed with a mace, his head dress a helmet without visor or plumes, another division is filled with groups of figures sitting cross-legged, and standing, their hands joined, and all paying high homage to the sacred tree and altar. In another is a small convex body in a boat, the prow of which is a lion's head, and the stern the expanded tail of a fish, over which is suspended a long cable. In the boat are three male figures, two of whom are rowing, and the third holding an umbrella over the convex. The vessel is in an open sea, in the midst of a tempest; near it are figures swimming and endeavouring by seizing piles &c. to save themselves from sinking. One on the point of drowning, is making an expiring effort to ascend the side; the features of all fully portray their melancholy situation.

In another compartment is the sacred tree and altar, surrounded by groups of figures, both male and female, some beating tympani, others playing cymbals, others dancing; the winged figures before described attend above the groups. The lintel of this gateway is borne by the uplifted hands of five uncouth dwarf figures, 5 feet high, with thick lips and flat noses, their hair curly, and having large protuberant bellies, appearing as if on the point of being crushed beneath the immense burthen they are supporting; in short, it is hardly possible to conceive sculpture more expressive of feeling than this.

A representation of the grand Monument fills another compartment of one of the perpendiculars.

The eastern gateway is of the same dimensions as the others, with door wardens armed with maces. Two of the compartments in each perpendicular comprise a procession leaving the gates of a city in progress to the tree and altar, near which is a human being, his hands strongly corded above the wrists, and held by another. The procession consists of horsemen, footmen, elephants, and short-bodied cars, drawn by horses, the latter crowned with plumes, all highly finished. The head dress of the figures seated on the cars is the Roman helmet, with the plumes and hair. The whole is preceded by footmen, armed with circular shields and clubs, followed by a band of musicians playing flutes. The head dress of the groupe running by the side of the cars, differs from that of all others, being a closely fitting turban of circular folds, most exquisitely delineated, on the top of which is a small globular crown.

Another compartment is filled with figures of devotees of different orders, performing various penances. In another division are three figures with long beards, the only figures of this description seen throughout the whole building, seated in a boat in an open sea, at the bottom of which are seen various kinds of shells, alligators &c. Underneath the ocean, and as if supporting it, are three male figures and one female, the central male figure with uplifted hands, and his back outwards, the female in the act of praying to him. The whole of this groupe are clad in long loose vests, and the head dresses of the males resemble mitres. On both sides of the groupe are the winged figures, the tree, and altar.

The lintel of this gateway is supported by elephants, richly caparisoned, and resting on projecting horizontal cornices:

The capitals of the several gateways are crowned by figures of lions, elephants, naked and clothed statues, and images of various birds and beasts.

On the south, there is a plain entrance, near which is a double colonnade of quadrangular pillars, 20 feet high, most curiously set up, and forming an almost oval apartment. Near this lies a large obelisk, in circumference nearly equalling the Lath of Firoze Shah, near Delhi. On the part which is uppermost I could not observe any inscription, it is worked with a string of flowers.

At the door of the apartment above mentioned, is the lower part of a statue of Parswanatha, smaller than those of Buddha in the gateways, resting on a throne which is supported by lions couchant on a pedestal, on which is an inscription, but so much obli-

terated that I could make nothing of it, although the few letters that partially remain are Sanscrita. Near this is also a pillar 14 feet high and 3½ in circumference, crowned with lions and tigers.

In front of and about 60 feet from the eastern gateway, lie the shafts of two obelisks, about 10 feet in length, broken from the bases, which formed an entrance 14 feet in width; on these I confidently expected to find an inscription, but was disappointed.

The whole has been surrounded by a stone wall, varying in distance from the monument, from 60 to 400 feet. It is 12 feet thick, and 8 feet high, built without cement; at the four intermediate points were gateways, similar to but on a smaller scale than those in the colonnade around the monument.

The wall has fallen into general decay, and only one gateway now remains, which is on the north-east.

In the upper compartments of the perpendiculars are female figures naked and fettered, supporting on their heads a circle divided into 27 equal parts; there are also figures holding snakes, standing close to a small relieve representation of the monument, in the body of which is a small aperture. This, as I have before said, serves to strengthen the opinion of apartments existing within. The lintel is slightly sculptured with circles of flowers in the same manner as in the others. It is supported by five uncouth dwarf images, with thick lips, curly hair, and their features expressive of the immensity of their burthens.

The upper parallels are beautifully sculptured with hooded serpents, passing through them in spiral wreaths. In that part of the outer wall which is still entire, are small flat-roofed apartments, 12 feet square, in most of which are large mutilated images of Buddha.

In a larger apartment, which stands opposite the eastern entrance to the monument, the roof of which is flat, and supported by a double row of granite pilasters, is a gigantic statue, the profile of the face measuring 13 inches from the fore-curls to the chin: The nose and lips are much disfigured, and both arms are broken off below the elbows. This appears to have been more highly finished than any other. In the same apartment on the right, is an image of Brahma, with the sacerdotal thread, the front face mutilated; the remaining, as well as all the tiaras, in excellent preservation. It measures 3 feet and a half from the throne, which is supported on two cobra capellas.

At the bottom and in the centre of the supporters, which are diamond-cut, are alto-relievo figures of the Brahminical order, their bodies thrown back in the act of attempting to avoid the heads of the serpents, which are not expanded, but projecting from under the throne, and turned as if endeavouring to ascend the columns.

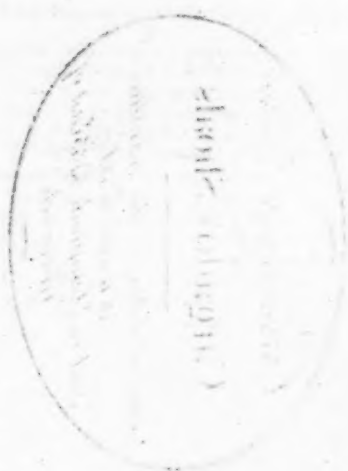
On projecting pedestals, and in a line with the diadem, are small figures of Parswanatha, cross-legged; another also crowns the centre. This is the only statue of the Brahminical mythology which I observed throughout the different subjects of sculpture. In a corner of the same apartment, is an image of Parswanatha, over which are five expanded serpent-hoods, the only one which possesses this distinguished mark.

I was highly gratified at finding, on one of the pilasters, a Sanscrita inscription, with a date, which determined the structure to have been completed in the 18th year of the Samoat æra, or 40 years anterior to the birth of our Saviour.

There are numerous inscriptions on different parts of the colonnade around the monument, in a character almost totally unintelligible to me, though some of the characters are Sanscrita. I have taken fac-similes of a few.

About a quarter of a mile to the northward of this Monument, is another, exactly similar to it in shape, but smaller, and built of free-stone without any cement, each layer closely fitting, and not projecting over each other as in the former; neither has this been covered with a coat of mortar. It has a buttress, which measures round the base 246 feet; the diameter of the superior surface 19 feet. It is in perfect repair, not a stone having fallen, and is surrounded by a colonnade of granite pillars, of the same description as that encompassing the large one, giving a clear area of 8 feet.

Almost every stone of this bears an inscription in characters similar to each other; there is no sculpture, nor gateways, but numerous stones lie strewn around in the vicinity of both Monuments, being parts of columns, capitals, mutilated images of Buddha, pedestals, tablets covered with sculptured figures of horsemen, elephants, lions, and almost obliterated inscriptions &c. There is no reservoir for water, nor a single well within the whole enclosure, nor on the hill; but there is a pukka tank and several wells lined





with masonry, about a mile from the Monuments, both of which are undoubtedly co-eval.

Any antiquary, killed in research, would here find employment and amusement for some time; even the taking fac-similes of the numerous old Sanscrita inscriptions that I observed (and more would perhaps be found if sought for) would occupy some days. I lament exceedingly my want of sufficient ability in the art of drawing, to do justice to the highly finished style of the sculptures; and also my deficiency in technical knowledge and in experience in the power of description, for which these Monuments afford ample scope.

These defects, together with the very limited time I possessed for inspection, will, I fear, render my account less satisfactory than I could wish, indeed, I am fully aware my description can convey but a very faint idea of the magnificence of such stupendous structures and exquisitely finished sculpture,—but as I know of no previous description of them that has been given to the world, I have been emboldened to send it you with all its imperfections on its head.

Hussingabad, Jan. 31, 1819.

E. FELL.

New Church at Benares.

To the Editor of the Calcutta Journal.

SIR,

I am lately arrived in Calcutta, from the Upper Provinces. At Benares, where I remained some days with a friend, I was gratified by the sight of a handsome Church, erected by the voluntary contributions of the community of the place, aided by a donation from the Honourable Company.

I was concerned to learn, however, that from the 1st of January last, no Clergyman had been appointed to its duties in succession to the Reverend Mr. Corrie; so that at this, the only station, I believe, throughout the whole interior of India at which a regular Church has been erected, there is no Clergyman to perform Divine Service.

The station is a large and important one; and in the hope, that this deficiency, which is universally regretted there, may attract, through the medium of your widely extended and highly respectable Journal, the attention of those authorities, by whom the omission can be easily supplied, I subscribe myself,

Your constant reader,

July 10, 1819.

VIATOR.

Nautical.

(With an Engraving of the Cargados Shoals.)

Our readers will remember the interesting account of the Shipwreck of the Honourable Company's Ship Cabalva, with the sufferings of the survivors, which we printed from the manuscript Journal of a gentleman, who arrived here from the scene, and who had himself remained on the desolate Island on which they were thrown for many days, with his fellow shipmates and passengers.

We regretted at the time, our inability to present our readers with a Chart of the dangers that had proved so fatal to that ship, in order to illustrate the Narrative by it; but we regretted it still more on the score of humanity; as the possession of such a document would be likely to save some other valuable ship, and still more valuable souls from destruction. Had the Officers or any of the Passengers of the Cabalva possessed it, simple and worthless as it may appear in the eyes of some, it would have been beyond all price to them; and as it is only by the encouragement of the community at large that such documents can be made public, we rejoice that by unanimous and general approbation, the Calcutta Journal is likely to become the depository of many valuable materials that but for the suffrage of its supporters in enabling the Proprietors thus to benefit mankind by the dissemination of useful knowledge, would be hidden in obscurity and be confined perhaps to the possession of one individual or of two at most.

We could write much and feelingly upon the importance of encouraging the publication of accurate Charts: since we have our-

selves often felt the want of them. The Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the eastern Archipelago, are yet not half explored, and ships are every year lost for want of accurate charts to guide them, while the importance of this is such in the estimation of Government that ships are expressly employed at an enormous expence on this service alone.

It will be said perhaps that sailors, to whom alone they are useful, may purchase them when published, whatever the expence may be—but this is not all. There are some, such as a Chart of the Shoals on which His Majesty's ship Alceste was lost—and a Chart of Singapore harbour—which we obtained from officers of vessels in those quarters who would not have ventured on the expence of publishing them on their own account—as they could not be rendered, if sold to seamen only, for less perhaps than twenty rupees a copy—and even then they would have been a year probably in course of publication. We have succeeded however, against much opposition, in being enabled to execute them immediately, and at the most trifling expence, formerly at one rupee and now at half a rupee per copy from the great increase of our circulation.

If then, by the publication of such documents, but one ship was rescued from destruction, or one life saved, whether it was the friend of the individual or not, is there a man alive who would shut his heart and hand against the encouragement of a task which at once advances the arts, increases the stock of human knowledge, and fulfils a duty of religion and humanity? We do not believe that such men are to be found, and we are persuaded that all the opposition it at first met with was purely from its novelty, and a want of due reflection on the important benefits that might result from it.

The Chart which we have published to-day, is from the manuscript of an Officer of the French Navy, and was furnished to us by a commander in Calcutta, who is intimately acquainted with the dangers it describes, and who speaks highly of its accuracy. Another copy of it is not known by him to exist, which must of course enhance the value of this.

With the references given below, it will explain itself.

REFERENCES.

- A. Place where there is fresh water
- B. Fishing Establishment of Majastro
- C. Old Establishment of M. Barbe
- D. Anchorage of the Frigate Surveillante
- E. N. W. Reef with two or three fathoms water on it, which only breaks in very bad weather
- F. Four beds of coral, level with the water which may be passed between in case of necessity
- G. Reef to the eastward of Pearl Island, breaking, and level with the water, but sometimes covered
- H. Reef covered with two fathoms of water which does not always break
- J. New Establishment of Monsieur Barbe, a roadstead near the S. W. point of Cardagos, which from the nature of the bottom would be preferable to that of the N. E. if water could be procured there
- K. These two islands are only covered with a species of low jungle unfit for firewood

The currents run from one to four miles per hour.

The following short and imperfect description by Horsburgh, the greatest authority for all nautical information connected with the seas to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, may be subjoined, to shew how little was known of these dangers previous to the loss of the Cabalva on them.

"Cargados Garajos Island, in latitude 16° 38' S. longitude 59° 57' E. is a chain of low islets or sand banks about 12 feet above water, with small gaps between them. It is in the form of a crescent, with anchorage in the concave side, which lies to the N. W.

This connected chain of low islets and banks, extends N. E. and S. W. about 6 leagues, and from the northern extremity, other detached islets and dangers project 8 or 9 leagues to the northward.

These are most probably the shoals called St. Brandon, among which Captain Edward Leger, of the Falcon, grounded, and was nearly lost, although in the charts they are generally laid down as separate shoals, those of St. Brandon being placed near 24° E. of Cargados Garajos. The extensive bank of soundings begins at this Island, and takes a direction N. N. Eastward about 65 leagues; the depths of water on it are from 20 to 40 fathoms. Chevalier Grenier sailed along it in 1769; it is called Cargados Garajos Bank, and is the Nazareth Bank of the old charts."

Arrivals.

The Honorable Company's ships *Atlas* and *Streatham* arrived yesterday in the river, the former anchored at the New Anchorage at noon, and the latter passed Kedgeree on her way up to Diamond Harbour; they left Portsmouth on the 1st of March, and touched no where.

Passengers on the Atlas.

Mrs. Francis Stewart; Mrs. Captain Rotton; Misses Mary Blundell, Susan Blundell, Olivia Kirkman; Mr. William Okedon, Writer; Messrs. J. Dyke, H. O. Williams, E. E. Poole, J. George, J. Dunbar, Cadets; Mr. A. Armstrong, returned to India; Mr. E. Rushworth; to reside in Bengal, Messrs. H. Atkins, and J. Cripps, Pilot Service;

Lieut. Colonel Sleigh, C. B. commanding the 11th Dragoons; Captains Smith, Rotton, Blundell, and Moore, Lieutenants A. Chambers, G. Anson, G. Williamson, L. Cooper, ditto; Cornets Hon'ble H. D. Shore, A. Bishop, C. Malet, J. Partridge, ditto; Paymaster Nolan; Adjutant G. Butche; Surgeon J. Omady; Assistant Surgeon J. Harcourt; 279 Men, 33 Women, and 37 Children of the 11th Dragoons.

Passengers on the Streatham.

Mrs. Walker; Miss Walker; Miss Patton; Miss Evans; Captain E. Delafosse, R. N.; Mr. N. N. Lewis, Cadet; Mr. E. Sandford, returned to India; Mr. W. Wright, Free Mariner;

Lieutenant Colonel Childers, Captains Jenkins, Binney, Elliott; Lieutenants Briscoe, Clarke, Archdall, Hon'ble D. Low, J. Allingham, R. Hollingworth, ditto; Cornet King Stewart; Assistant Surgeon Steele; Assistant Surgeon G. Grass; Quarter Master Henderson; 230 Men, 28 Women, and 45 Children of the 11th Dragoons.

The Honorable Company's Pilot vessel *Eliza*, Lieutenant G. Minchin, has arrived from Madras, having landed there His Excellency Sir Thomas Hislop on the 26th of June, and sailed again on the 2d of July.

Passengers on the Eliza.

Captain Blacker, 1st Madras Native Cavalry; Captain Home, 8th Madras Native Infantry; E. Abell, Esq.; Dr. J. Ronald; Mr. W. Howell, Assistant Surveyor on the Bengal Establishment; Mr. B. Suxton, attached to Colonel Mackenzie.

The ship *Windermere*, from Liverpool 24th of December, and *St. Helena* 28th of April, has arrived in the river.

The ship *Harleston*, from China 25th of April, and *Malacca* 9th of June, has also arrived here, having brought as passenger Lieutenant Reid, Royal Navy.

The Honorable Company's ships *Asia*, Warren Hastings, Lord Keith, and *Northampton*, had arrived at St. Helena from Bengal, and sailed for England on the 26th of April. The 66th Regiment had embarked by that opportunity.

Lord Byron.

Among the articles in the 61st or last Number of the Edinburgh Review, the contents of which we named on Thursdaylast, is a Review of Horace Walpole's Letters, in which the following anecdote is selected by the Reviewer from the work, and the succeeding remarks on it appended.

We have it in our power to add to this morgeau, the poetic effusion of the noble bard, on his quitting these halls of his ancestors, which will be found in the succeeding column.

The following is the account of Walpole's visit to Newsted Abbey,—the seat of the Byrons.

'As I returned, I saw Newsted and Althorpe; I like both. The former is the very abbey. The greatest window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on; It is a private chapel, quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned:

The present lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks; five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense, he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy; and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dress'd in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals; the refectory, now the great drawing room, is full of Byrons; the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor.'

This is a careless, but happy description, of one of the noblest mansions in England; and it will now be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the seat of the Byrons, old, majestic, and venerable;—but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which Fame sheds over the habitations of Genius, and which now mantles every turret of Newsted Abbey. He saw it when Decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel, and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to go forth from those antique cloisters, that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, 'Sleep no more, to all the house.' Whatever may be its future fate, Newsted Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the court-yard and the chambers. It may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride or plebeian opulence.—But it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish—and will go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals.

On leaving Newsted Abbey, the seat of his Ancestors.

By Lord Byron.

Why d'st thou build the Hall, Son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy tower to-day: yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes: it howls in thy empty court.

OSSIAN.

Through thy battlements, NEWSTED, the hollow winds whistle;
Thou, the hall of my Fathers, art gone to decay;
In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle
Have choked up the rose which late bloomed in the way;

Of the mail cover'd Barons, who proudly to battle
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
The escutcheon and shield which with every blast rattle,
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain!

No more doth old Robert, with harp stringing numbers
Raise a flame in the breast for the war-laurel'd wreath;
Near Askalon's towers, John of Horiston slumbers
Unerv'd is the hand of his Minstrel by Death:

Paul and Hubert too sleep in the valley of CRESSY;
For the safety of EDWARD and England they fell;
My Fathers! the tears of your country redress ye!
How ye fought! how ye died! still her annals can tell!

On Marston* with Rupert † 'gainst traitors contending
Four brothers enrich'd with their blood the bleak field,
For the rights of a monarch, their country defending
Till Death their attachment to Royalty sealed.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant departing
From the seat of his Ancestors bids you Adieu!
Abroad or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he'll think upon glory and you.

Though a tear dim his eye, at this sad separation,
Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret;
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation;
The fame of his Fathers he ne'er can forget!

That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish;
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;
Like you will be live, or like you will be perish;
When decay'd may he mingle his dust with your own!

* Horistan Castle in Derbyshire, an ancient seat of the Byron family.

† The battle of Marston Moor, where the adherents of Charles I. were defeated.

‡ Son of the Elector Palatine, and related to Charles I, he afterwards commanded in the fleet in the reign of Charles II.